

CROWN NOMINATIONS COMMISSION
A REPORT FOR GENERAL SYNOD

1. Following the decision of the Crown Nominations Commission in 2010 to include interviews as part of the process of discernment for Diocesan Bishops, the Commission agreed that a report would be provided to General Synod in 2012 “with an evaluation of this new step in the process”. The then “central members” (i.e. those elected by General Synod) and the Archbishops reviewed the interview process at the end of 2011 as preparation for the Synod report. However, this was not shared with Synod given the ongoing nomination process of the Archbishop of Canterbury in 2012 and election of new central members. In essence the report concluded that interviews should continue, as they have since then.
2. In response to a question in July 2015, the Archbishop of York advised that the current central members would conduct a review of interviews and report to Synod. In November 2016, again in response to a question, he advised that this report would provide a wider update of the Commission’s business. The context for this is S.O.136(4) “The Commission must report to Synod from time to time as it deems expedient on matters of general concern within its area of responsibility”.

GENERAL

3. The current central members of the Crown Nominations Commission are as follows

Lay

Mrs April Alexander
 Mr Aiden Hargreaves- Smith
 Ms Jane Patterson

Clergy

The Revd John Dunnett
 The Revd Canon Judith Maltby
 The Very Revd Andrew Nunn

The current central members were elected to the Commission in 2012 and will serve until mid-2017.

4. The Commission has nominated to 16 Diocesan Sees (a list is set out at the end of this note) and supported the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London and the Archbishop of Lokoja (nominated by the Anglican Communion) in their nomination to the Diocese of Europe. Some 102 individuals have joined the Commission as Diocesan Representatives of whom 35.3% were women. From now on, the Commission will commence formal diversity monitoring of its membership to enable more detailed reporting.
5. Over the period, the Commission has interviewed 66 different candidates. The first vacancy for which female candidates could be considered was Southwell and Nottingham. Since then 40 candidates have been considered of whom 13 (32.5%) were female and less than five were BAME. Two out of the six nominations (33%) were female.

INTERVIEWS

6. Following a survey of diocesan representatives (41% response rate) and discussion by the Central Members, it was concluded that interviews were a critical part of the discernment of a candidate's calling to a particular diocese. Respondents advised that interviews were important to challenge preconceptions about candidates. The presentation and homily element of the interview were seen as a useful indicator of the candidates' understanding of diocesan context also providing an indication of how they might handle the public role of the bishop. The central members are very aware that an interview can disadvantage candidates who are more introvert or less practised in interviews. They are also conscious that the evidence and material from a range of sources contained in the comprehensive paperwork must remain an important part of the process. In addition, they are alert to handling the dynamics of a large interviewing group and have worked very hard on the balance of structured interviews and exploratory questioning.
7. Mindful that the interview is one stage of a wider discernment process, the current Commission is confident that interviews are essential to their work.

LEGAL ISSUES

8. In 2014 the General Synod enacted the measure enabling women to be ordained as bishops in the Church of England. Those serving on the Crown Nominations Commission for all Vacancies in See must accept and work within the House of Bishops' Declaration especially the Five Guiding Principles contained therein.
9. The Archbishops' Guidelines on the implementation of "Choosing Bishops – the Equality Act 2010 (revised) GS1044" were revised and made public in October 2015.

TRAINING

10. The central members have engaged in the Church of England Unconscious Bias training and also worked with an external facilitator to explore issues of group dynamics and process. Future diocesan representatives will also be asked to take part in Unconscious Bias training and more intentional briefing will be put in place in advance of representatives attending a meeting of the Commission. The Central members continue to be alert to their own training needs.

OTHER

11. Central members of the Commission continue to keep the process of meetings under review. To that end they have
 - Increased the time available for interview;
 - Worked to develop a more probing interview with fewer questioners and more in depth questions; and
 - Structured the feedback on candidates to ensure that each member of the Commission shares their views.

FUTURE PLANS

12. Central members of the Commission have agreed that the process for revising the Standing Order provision whereby the Commission needs to identify two names (SO 136(3)) commence. This will be brought to Synod in due course.
13. It is anticipated that the Commission will have fewer vacancies over the next few years and, in the light of this, the Archbishops have commissioned a theological review of its work and the Chair will be announced in due course. It is intended that this will be presented to General Synod for discussion in 2018.
14. The central members are conscious of the continuing need for diversity in the candidate pool, in relation to the usual indicators as well as church tradition and ministerial background. This is an issue they would wish to emphasise as further nominations are made to the pool of candidates for consideration.

✂ Justin Cantuar:

✂ Sentamu Eboracensis

VACANCIES CONSIDERED

Bath & Wells
Blackburn
Durham
Europe
Exeter
Gloucester
Guildford
Hereford
Leeds
Leicester
Lichfield
Liverpool
Manchester
Newcastle
Oxford
Southwell & Nottingham
St Edmundsbury and & Ipswich